



Texas Department of Family and Protective Services

Commissioner
Jaime Masters

Rider 36: Caseworker to Management Ratios

In response to Rider 36, the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) evaluated the management to caseworker ratios in the Child Protective Services (CPS) and Adult Protective Services (APS) programs. Management-to-staff ratios are used to determine an organization's "span of control," or the number of employees who report directly to a single manager or supervisor. Supervisors managing fewer employees have a narrower span of control. Those managing many subordinates have a wide span. Span of control isn't assigned arbitrarily, and there is no one number that signals wide or narrow. A wide span of control may be appropriate if jobs are simple or routine. In such cases, a manager oversees more employees while still competently managing the work of the entire group or unit. Narrower spans are required for managers responsible for subordinates performing more critical, complicated, or customized work. The work that DFPS caseworkers perform is very complex as they are charged with the protection of children and vulnerable adults from abuse, neglect and exploitation.

The job of DFPS supervisors is crucial when it comes to making ongoing, vital decisions with their caseworkers that will impact the families and children we serve. By maintaining a limited span of control of these supervisors, we can more effectively maintain the quality of case oversight to ensure families and children are provided with even greater care and services. In addition, supervisors can more ably participate in staff development and follow up with caseworkers on critical tasks to elevate the quality of supervision and work within the unit.

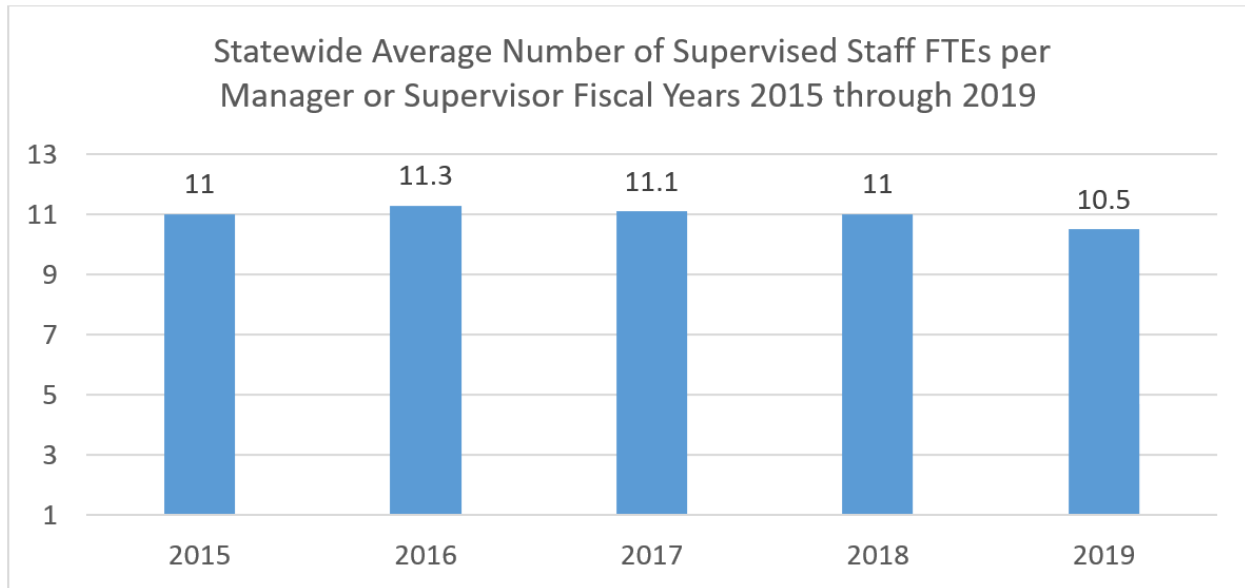
Moreover, supervisors are ultimately responsible for the life of the case until safe resolution is achieved. They are responsible for managing new cases each week, while providing oversight for ongoing cases to ensure all tasks are completed and safety is put in place for children and vulnerable adults.

With the above said, Texas state agencies and higher education institutions have statutory requirements for management-to-staff ratios.

Texas Government Code, Section 651.004(c), specifies that if an entity in the executive branch employs more than 100 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) employees, it "...may not employ more than one full-time equivalent employee in a management position for every 11 full-time equivalent employees...in non-managerial staff positions." However, section (e) of the same Texas Government Code states "The Department of Family and Protective Services is not required to comply with management-to-staff ratio requirements of this section with respect to caseworker supervisors, program directors, and program administrators."

Statewide, the average management-to-staff ratio, calculated using FTEs, for fiscal year 2019 was 1:10.5. State agencies averaged a management-to-staff ratio of 1:11.9, while higher education institutions averaged a management-to-staff ratio of 1:9.7.

Statewide Average Number of Supervised Staff FTEs per Manager or Supervisor Fiscal Years 2015 through 2019



Source: FTE System, State Auditor’s Office.

Background

In 2004, several high-profile abuse and neglect cases focused attention on CPS’s level of staffing and caseloads. In 2005, the 79th Legislature enacted Senate Bill 6, which instructed the Department to improve the services it provides to children. In 2007, the 80th Legislature enacted Senate Bill 758, a continuation of the Department’s reform, focused primarily on the CPS program.

Staffing levels, as measured by the average number of caseworkers statewide, increased from 3,139 employees in fiscal year 2004 to 4,104 employees in fiscal year 2007, a 31 percent increase. As a result, the management to staff ratio increased from 2007- 2014.

Management to Staff Ratio from 2007 through 2014

As of date	Company	Employee Full-Time	Employee Part-Time	Employee Total	Manager Total	Ratio
8/31/2007	PRS	10,143	62	10,205	1,323	7.71
8/31/2008	PRS	11,247	56	11,303	1,443	7.83
8/31/2009	PRS	11,347	57	11,404	1,496	7.62
8/31/2010	PRS	11,625	50	11,675	1,457	8.01
8/31/2011	PRS	11,179	42	11,221	1,437	7.81
8/31/2012	PRS	11,216	41	11,257	1,371	8.21
8/31/2013	PRS	11,364	50	11,414	1,384	8.25
8/31/2014	PRS	12,602	49	12,651	1,526	8.29

In 2015, the Adult Protective Services centralized (APS) Facility Investigation (AFC) program under one director and restructured the In-Home (IH) program from regions to districts. A total of 77 employees were affected by the reorganization.

Worker and Supervisor APS Management to Staff Ratio

Program	Fiscal Year	Avg Mgmnt FTE	Avg Staff FTE	Ratio
APS	2015	109.5	680.6	6.2
APS	2016	109.6	678.3	6.2
APS	2017	109.9	686.3	6.2
APS	2018	82.1	521.4	6.4
APS	2019	81.4	514.5	6.3
APS	2020 YTD	79.8	546.8	6.9

Note: 2015 -2017 includes APS Facility. 2018-2020 does not have APS Facility

In 2017, CPS added 828 positions as part of the critical needs funding. Below is the amount of positions added to the CPS division.

Fiscal Year 2017 Critical Staffing Needs

Region	INV	SI	CVS	FBSS	Total
020 (Abilene)	-	-	20	-	20
030 (Dallas)	83	40	-	41	164
050 (Beaumont)	-	-	16	-	16
060 (Harris & surrounding)	53	40	-	60	153

Region	INV	SI	CVS	FBSS	Total
070 (Austin)	64	10	69	23	166
08 (San Antonio)	-	10	-	21	31
Caseworkers	200	100	105	145	550
Regional Supervisors	33	10	15	21	79
Regional Unit Support	33	-	30	42	105
Regional Management	26	-	8	6	40
Regional Unit Support	92	10	53	69	224
Training/Hiring	15.6	1.4	8.2	11.3	36.5
Agency Support	6.3	4.2	3.3	4.5	18.3
Agency Operations	21.9	5.6	11.5	15.8	54.8
TOTAL FTEs	313.9	115.6	169.5	229.8	828.8

The accumulation of positions since 2015 and the split in 2017 that created separate CPS and Investigations programs has resulted in the management to staff ratios below:

Worker and Supervisor CPS Management to Staff Ratio 2015-2017

Program	Fiscal Year	Avg Mgmt FTE	Avg Staff FTE	Ratio
CPS	2015	868.7	5724.3	6.6
CPS	2016	869.0	5769.0	6.6
CPS	2017	910.8	6407.9	7.0

Note: Includes INV and CPS pre-split

Worker and Supervisor CPS Management to Staff Ratio 2018-2020 YTD

Program	Fiscal Year	Avg Mgmt FTE	Avg Staff FTE	Ratio
CPS	2018	523.7	3789.1	7.2
CPS	2019	531.9	3833.5	7.2
CPS	2020 YTD	548.5	3814.3	7.0

Worker and Supervisor CPI Management to Staff Ratio 2018-2020 YTD

Program	Fiscal Year	Avg Mgmt FTE	Avg Staff FTE	Ratio
CPI	2018	424.5	2849.4	6.7
CPI	2019	424.3	2887.8	6.8
CPI	2020 YTD	419.8	2886.8	6.9

Current Ratios:

Maintaining appropriate management to staff ratios is critical to the success in protecting the families and children we serve. Child Protective Investigations (CPI) Supervisor, Program Director, and Program Administrator jobs are challenging and demanding. These challenges and

demands can be mitigated and reduced to appropriate levels by maintaining a limited span of control, which permits supervisors to uphold their responsibilities for case oversight and support for front-line staff.

CPI Supervisors who manage a unit of 6-8 caseworkers are tasked with incredible responsibility. On average, a worker receives 14.4 cases a month. One Supervisor having 7 case assignable workers, which is close to a third of the investigative units, distributes 3.6 cases per week to each worker, with around 60 children represented in the approximately 28 cases distributed for one week. These supervisors are responsible for the life of the case until safe resolution is reached. Managing new cases each week, while providing oversight for cases pending, to ensure all tasks are completed and safety is put in place for children, is an ongoing and vital task. Supervisors provide oversight on cases specific to the essential tasks and policy requirements prior to case closure or transfer to other stages of service. They must be very involved in any situation involving the potential removal of a child, including staffing with their program director and attorney, scrutinizing legal documents, and attending court hearings with their caseworkers. They also assist with hiring and are responsible for continued development of their staff during and after their initial training.

In Child Protective Services (CPS), Family Based Safety Services (FBSS), supervisors must be involved in any situation involving the successful and safe closure of a family preservation case, recommending the potential removal of a child, including staffing with their program director and attorney, scrutinizing legal documents, and attending court hearings with their caseworkers.

In Conservatorship (CVS), supervisors are involved in legal proceedings that may result in reunification of children with their families, termination of parental rights and, ultimately, the safety, permanency and well-being of all children. Responsibilities also include staffing with their program director and attorney, scrutinizing legal documents, and attending court hearings with their caseworkers.

In Adult Protective Services (APS), maintaining the management to staff ratio is critical, considering supervisors are required to perform 100% case readings, meaning they are required to read every case from their caseworkers before it gets approved and closed. On average it takes approximately 1.5 hours to read and approve a case by the supervisor, which means they can read approximately 5 cases per day. Supervisors' other duties include but are not limited to; training staff, oversight of expenses, taking corrective personnel actions, engaging community partners, and staffing cases with each caseworker for consult. It is also particularly important to maintain appropriate spans of control for APS supervisors given a projected overall increase in cases for the program.

Specifically, by 2030 the Texas population of adults 65 and older is projected to increase by 42.54%¹. As client populations increase, the number of APS investigations will also increase. From fiscal year 2009- 2019, there was a 31%² increase in APS intakes.

¹ Texas Demographic Center, <https://demographics.texas.gov/Data/TPEPP/Projections/>

² DFPS Data Book

Conclusion:

The current span of control (as reflected in the ratios) of both APS and CPS is appropriate given the complexity and risk involved in the work. It has developed over time with legislative input and direction as seen in appropriations decisions and is in keeping with what professionals in the field know from experience.

Any widening of the current span of control could increase risk to vulnerable adults and children. Although alternative ratios that increase span of control could reduce the need for resources to be allocated to supervisor positions, the impact would certainly be harmful to the quality of casework in APS and CPS, far outweighing any potential savings from reduced supervisor staffing.

Appendix

Rider 36

36. Caseworker and Management Ratio Study. Out of funds appropriated above, in Strategy E.1.1,

Central Administration, the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) shall evaluate management to caseworker ratios for Child and Adult Protective Services to determine the effects

of alternative ratios on expenditures and agency operations.

DFPS shall report the findings of the study to the Legislative Budget Board, the Governor, and permanent committees in the House of Representatives and the Senate with jurisdiction over health and human services and appropriations by September 1, 2020.

https://www.lbb.state.tx.us/Documents/GAA/General_Appropriations_Act_2020_2021.pdf Page II-19